

Interview with Beauveau B. Nalle

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

BEAUVEAU B. NALLE

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Initial interview date: April 19, 1994

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Q: This is Thomas Dunnigan and the date is April 19, 1994. Today I will be talking with Beau Nalle on behalf of the Oral History Program of the Foreign Service Institute. Mr. Nalle spent over 30 years in the Foreign Service and served on 4 continents.

Let me begin by asking you Beau, how did you first get interested in a Foreign Service career?

NALLE: It was an evolutionary sort of thing. I had developed earlier an interest in teaching when I was at the University of Virginia. I had wanted to be a school teacher and had not found any particularly appealing openings in the United States. I heard from a friend about the existence of the Near East College Association which was the successor to the American Board of foreign missions of the congregationalist church and through a complicated chain of events, I ended up spending 3 years in Roberts College in Istanbul.

Then somewhat to my surprise I was drafted, although I had served in the American Field Service in 1945. In 1952 I was reclassified to 1-A, pulled into the army and sent off to Arlington Hall station where I spent 2 years. Came out of the army, had the GI bill and went to Johns Hopkins School of International Studies here in Washington because at

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the time I was looking around for opportunities other than school teaching. My years in Istanbul had awakened me to the world of international affairs.

I was recruited by a friend of mine at the CIA, to come and work for them. The process took some 4 years from start to finish. But to sum it up, when I finally took the Foreign Service exam and passed it and went for the orals, I had in my pocket a letter from that agency offering me a job as a GS9. The letter made it an awful lot easier to pass the Foreign Service oral exams. Both my wife and I decided I would be more likely a success as a diplomat than as a spy. So I opted for the Foreign Service.

Q: I note that not unnaturally your first post was Turkey, were you pleased with that?

NALLE: Well, I should point out that actually my first assignment was Washington, DC, where I spent 2 pretty awful years as one of the first 3 FSOs ever assigned to the Office of Security. I was a Special Agent, or as we used to call ourselves, a gunslinger.

It was kind of funny, when the A-100 class ended we were all lined up; there was no bidding system, there was no democracy. Max Krebs stood up in front of us and said—You go here, you go there and don't argue, boy. In this case, one woman.

Along with Dick Morefield who subsequently was one of the hostages in Tehran, and a very bright chap named Ed Walters, who resigned some years ago unfortunately, we were sent to the Washington field office of the Office of Security. And I spent a year investigating people. It was really pretty awful stuff.

I had a badge, which was known in those days as a buzzer, and I would drive around investigating FSOs, investigating elevator operators, investigating political appointees, the whole bag. I still have authority from Secretary Dulles to carry firearms whilst on duty! I guess my only real success was that I investigated a man who was wanted by Secretary Dulles to be his Special Assistant.

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I uncovered the fact that the guy was a fair going alcoholic and was drunk about 23 hours a day. It was pretty simple to do. You just had to go around and ask people. The case was taken out of my hands, not as a security matter but as a suitability matter. The man was not on for the job and I heard that Secretary Dulles was livid. I thought it was all kind of funny.

But it was also interesting because, this mind you was in 1956, we weren't that far away from Senator McCarthy. It was an experience to me, a man who worked for the old Henry Wallace-Glen Taylor Progressive Party in 1948, it was an experience and a somewhat frightening experience. To see the way the whole government of the United States quailed and quivered if somebody mentioned the word "communist."

I had the pleasure of working for sometime with the infamous, or famous if you will, Otto Otepka. Who in fact was a pretty decent guy.

After a year of investigating I was then sent up to a little office that had liaison with agencies within the United States that generated material of interest to the State Department. That was primarily the FBI although we also had liaison with local police agencies around the country. And our main interest was the behavior of diplomats credited to the United States. And also of quote "communist front" unquote organizations and publications.

In order to keep an eye on the intellectuals of the country, we used to subscribe to a lot of magazines like the New Republic and The Nation and other things considered by my superiors to lean dangerously to the left. And we had a lot of fun reading those as official business.

We also were involved in the activities of the trade unions, the Greek trade unions I remember, particularly the Greek Maritime trade unions, were considered ready to blow up the Capitol.

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It was a pretty grim business. We all 3 of us one time went to Mr. E.T. Bailey, the Director, a career FSO himself, new to the job and hating it as much as we did. We said in effect, "Mr. Bailey we joined the Foreign Service to do foreign service work and we find ourselves being as it were special agents, cops, police. Were there any options?" Mr. Bailey looked up and said in a thin dry voice, "Yes, you can quit." Which was typical I think of the attitude of some of those old folks. You did your job or you got out. You didn't fuss around too much.

So that was my first assignment and then as you said, because of my experience at Roberts College, I was sent for a year's language training at the Institute. And then to Iskenderun, Turkey with my wife and our 2 children.

Iskenderun, also known as Alexandretta, is a post that we opened in the late 1930's, kept open during the war, closed it, then reopened it again, I don't know what all. But anyway, I went there in the Summer of 1959. There was a principal officer Malcolm Thompson and his wife, Marion; an American secretary, Jonny Margaret Whitley; and myself and my wife Sheila and our two small children, aged at that time about almost 3 years and about 2 years.

It was a fascinating and awful experience. It was awful for my wife, as is typical of the way the wives were treated in those days, and up until not more than 5, 6 years ago I would say. We lived in an indescribably uncomfortable and small little apartment in the same building as the office.

The Consul lived directly over our head. He was a middle-aged man with no children. The secretary lived across the airwell from us. She was an old time secretary who had been in Iron Curtain posts and had been an Ambassador's secretary at one time in her career. And wanted a little peace and quiet where she could drink scotch and coke to her heart's content. And our two children were like other children, they'd fuss and they'd carry on, their cries could be heard throughout the building. Sheila was mortified and was angry.

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There was little or no electricity in the building. Water was sporadic and an open sewer ran by the front door.

Sheila had not one single minute of Turkish language training. There were none I suppose in Iskenderun, less than 10 people who could speak English. One of the tragic memories of my life was seeing Sheila sitting on an overstuffed ottoman talking to the wives of Turkish generals and business people who couldn't speak English. It was a terrible experience for her. And I think embittered her towards the Foreign Service for the rest of my career.

Q: What did you do, what was the real work in the office?

NALLE: We had a huge consular district that extended all the way east to the Iranian border, the Iraq border and the Syrian border. Most of it was off limits. The Embassy contended that since the Turks gave us all exequaturs for those provinces, we were allowed to go there. The Turks said we had to ask permission first. The Embassy said, "We don't ask permission."

And so the Consul, Mac Thompson, and I would each take a long swing through the consular district. He would usually go in the spring, and I would go in the autumn. We'd be gone for about 2 weeks. We tried to visit every province except Hakkari, we agreed to the sensitivity of that. The problem was of course the Kurdish problem. The Kurdish problem then was no different from what it is today.

I, at least twice, was shot at and in each case I assume it was by Kurds. And in one case, they hit the old green jeep station wagon we had, and I drove home cheerfully with a bullet hole in the rear end of the car. There was that.

There was a very interesting group of U.S. social security recipients who lived up the mountains. We had to take care of them, getting them their social security checks once

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a month, there were about 150 of them. We distributed a lot of money out there through social security. There was modest American investment.

There was in the city of Izmir a U.S. army transportation corps port detachment, 2 officers and 3 or 4 enlisted people. And in the city of Adana, some 110 miles away, there was the famous Incirlik air force base.

Q: Excuse me, you talked about Izmir, did you mean Izmir or Iskenderun?

NALLE: Iskenderun, I'm sorry.

Q: I just wanted to straighten it out because I know there's quite a distance.

NALLE: There is indeed.

About 100 miles from Iskenderun there was the famous Incirlik air force base which made history as the take-off place for Francis Gary Powers. I knew Powers reasonably well, had a lot of dealings with him. And was amused. One time he came to me, (I used to go up to the base once a week to do consular services) and wanted his passport renewed. It was a Department of the Air Force civilian special passport. I said, "Well, Mr. Powers I'm sorry, we don't normally renew passports until a couple of weeks before they're due to expire." I said, "But look, you get me a letter from your supervisor asking for early retirement and I'll be more than happy to do it." He said, "No sweat."

Q: Not early retirement.

NALLE: Early renewal. He said, "No sweat." And I went back the next week and there he was with his letter. It was addressed to—Beau Nalle, Vice Consul; Subject-Powers, Francis Gary; social security number so-and-so; Passport-Early Renewal of, Request For—that kind of army/air force talk.

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The body of the letter said—"It is requested that the passport number so-and-so of Francis Gary Powers be renewed early since Mr. Powers frequently travels in areas of the world where U.S. consular services are not readily available." And about a month later when he was shot down, I thought to myself, yes sir-ee there's no consular office in Central Russia.

Q: How true, how true.

NALLE: Actually I was on the base the day that the bird had been shot down. It was pretty exciting. You used to see, what do they call them? The thing he'd flown?

Q: The U-2.

NALLE: The U-2. You used to see those things flying around Iskenderun quite often.

They had sort of 3 different cover stories. The first one was, what airplane? We never saw anything. The second cover story was, yeah, it's a special high altitude research plane that we're using for weather reconnaissance.

The third one, if you had every clearance known to man and a few more, they would admit that what the thing used to do was to fly up along the Russian border, but still well within Turkey's airspace, analyzing Russian ground to air defenses and what they call "quick alert reaction" or "quick reaction alert." To see how long it would take to scramble the Russian air force when a hostile aircraft flew into radar view.

The original story they handed out was that the airplane crashed inside Turkey. And I told the guy who was my contact up there, the Deputy Commander, that both the consul and I knew that area intimately. We traveled there a great deal, we knew the governors, we knew the police officials, and if we could do anything by going out on the spot, we'd be very happy to do so. But it all came out in the mail, in the laundry, so to speak. We never did anything more.

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Q: Can I write that after several years in Iskenderun you were transferred to Ankara?

NALLE: Yeah I went up to Ankara as acting head of the Consular section for 3 or 4 months while the incumbent was on home leave. And then I went into the Political/Military section, working for Bill Dale who was Counselor. That was a wonderful embassy in those days.

The Ambassador was one of the very few heroes that I look at in the Foreign Service, the late Ambassador Raymond Hare, a man of enormous ability, a man of enormous integrity and decency and skill and everything else that he ought to be. I rank him right along with Loy Henderson and perhaps even a little bit ahead of Henderson.

Q: What particular issues did you deal with there?

NALLE: I got all of the scraps that fell off the table. Bill Dale spent most of his time on very heavy serious matters, Turkish-American political/military affairs. Anything that he didn't do I kind of did.

I had to negotiate or help negotiate a labor agreement between the Turkish trade union that worked on the bases and the Tumpane Company. Tumpane was based out of Ohio and looked upon trade unions as something only less dangerous than perhaps Aids. The Turkish unions were just starting to get fairly antsy and, as it were, militant. And the negotiation was kind of interesting. One of the sticky points was—what do you do with the bacon fat left over from the grill at the Officers Club and the Enlisted Men's Club. That took us a couple of days to arrange.

What other things did I do? We got involved in a case when a couple of young kids got drunk. To put it bluntly, carved up a Turkish whore with a butcher knife and nearly killed her. And took off across the Anatolian plateau in the middle of August with the temperature over 100 degrees, trying to go to Syria. We caught them, or the Turks caught them. We,

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very properly, would not issue a duty certificate although some felt it would have been appropriate!

So they went into a Turkish jail and eventually we got a letter from the Senator of their home state. Ambassador Hare brought it down to me and said, "Give me a draft reply." I said, "Fine, Mr. Ambassador, how do you want to handle it?" He said, "Tell them the truth, be short, be blunt." And I said to him, "Well Sir, I've just gotten from OSI some photographs of the woman taken after these guys did their trick on her. Would it be useful to send them along?" And he said, "Yeah, it's a great idea."

The letter from the Senator was talking about these fine young American boys and how they're being subjected to brutal Turkish torture and one thing or another. So we replied and the Ambassador sent the letter. We never heard another word from that Senator. I tell you, sending the photographs did the job.

Another time, one of the major news magazines had a stringer in Beirut who was not an American citizen, he was Lebanese. He was driving through Turkey on his way to Paris, was in an automobile accident and killed a Turk, and was in jail. We were aware of it. The man was not an American citizen, he was an employee of a news magazine but there was nothing we saw that we could do. And it kind of bounced around between political/military and consular section.

Finally the Paris Bureau Chief came to Ankara, had an interview with the Ambassador and I was asked to sit in as a note-taker. And the man first of all got a briefing from the Ambassador as to the status of the case, then wondered if the Ambassador had talked to the Minister of Justice. And the Ambassador said—no, he hadn't, furthermore, he didn't see really why he had any right to talk to the Minister of Justice on a matter like this. The Bureau Chief had trouble accepting that fact. And then he asked the Ambassador, somewhat obliquely, if he had any funds available for taking care of judges. And the Ambassador said very tartly, that he didn't do business that way, nor did the US

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government. Finally the guy said, "Well Mr. Ambassador, I should tell you my magazine has a very wide circulation in Washington. And I would hate to see anything unfavorable towards you or your Embassy appear in the pages." Then the Ambassador stood up, looked at me and said, "Mr. Nalle, would you show this gentleman downstairs please."

He was livid. His little moustache was sticking out like this, his eyes were sparkling. He would have physically assaulted the man in another minute, I think.

Q: It wasn't very diplomatic of our "friend." Now, those were the years, were they not, of great unrest in Turkey? The overthrow of the Menderes government as I recall?

NALLE: Well, yes indeed there were. In fact that happened when I was still in Iskenderun. But yes, there was enormous turmoil then. The army stepped in. Menderes was hanged along with Zorlu and 2 other members of the Cabinet. I think there were a total of 4 people hanged. There were various military interventions and various efforts at intervention.

We had found a little house, there was no government furnished housing in those days. So we had a kind of grubby little house not too far away from the embassy. I used to walk to work everyday. Come home for lunch, walk home from lunch, if I wasn't doing something else.

One morning, quite early, we heard a jet flying very low over the house. Sheila kind of jumped over the bed and said, "My God, it's the revolution!" I said, "No, it's just Pan American flight 3 coming in early." Because the airport wasn't that far away. Well they kept flying back and forth and I realized that something was wrong. So I got up, got dressed and walked down to the embassy.

That was the Talat Aydemir revolt. And that's the one and only time that I've ever taken live fire from the Turkish air force. We were out front of the embassy and the Swiss Military Attach# came by. I'd never seen a Swiss officer in dress uniform, a pretty impressive sight. And then a column of troops went by and the Assistant Army Attach# asked me if I would

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walk along with him and interpret while he talked to the troop commander. I said, sure. And these were loyal to the government, they're the presidential bodyguards.

Then we walked down, if you know Ankara, the embassy's not all that far away from the Parliament and the offices of the general staff. So we walked down there and the cadets from the military academy, the Harp Okulu, were trying to seize the general staff headquarters, There was sporadic firing going on. And we were marching along and suddenly one of the Turkish F81s or 85s, came in behind us flying very low and cut loose with a couple of bursts of something-millimeter cannon, I don't know what millimeter it was. But we could see the shots hitting the ground. They were coming in short, they were aiming at the cadets but they were coming in more directly at us and the troops.

I'm a civilian! I'm not paid to get shot so I took off and ran. I've never run so fast in my life. I jumped under a tank, which I'd noticed, it was lying there. And behold, the Assistant Army Attach# was about 2 seconds behind me.

Yeah, there was a lot of political stress in those days. It was very interesting because through my work I got to know a great many of the senior Turkish army officers. Ambassador Hare did not want us in the Political/Military section mingling with non-NATO diplomatic personnel. He said that our work was not understood by most of the NATO people, let alone the rest of the world. In particular, he wanted us to have nothing to do with Soviet personnel. But he encouraged us to make contact with Turkish military people and of course with JUSMAT and TUSLOG, the 2 big US military organizations there. The drawback to the job was that I had nothing to do with Turkish political affairs. Except peripherally I might get material of interest. I was able to build up some contacts with the Turkish Socialist Party.

But our kids went to Turkish school. Indeed, we began to worry when our older daughter came back from school one day and said, "Mommy, Daddy, you know next to God I love Ataturk best." This is when we decided we better put them in the American military school.

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Another indication I forgot to mention in Iskenderun how things were. Our 2 little girls, little tiny things, 3 and 1 # year old, in 2 separate cases were molested by a dirty old man who hung around the front of the office. We didn't know about it until a couple of days later when the children mentioned it to us.

Q: A Turk?

NALLE: In this case he was not a real Turk, he was one of the many minorities, he was an Alawi. We complained to the police and the police chased the guy away but he kept showing up again. It was one hell of an introduction. I found it utterly fascinating but it put a strain on our marriage.

Q: Was this the period when Vice President Johnson came out to Turkey?

NALLE: Yes indeed it was. I suppose you've gotten stories of that but it was funny. He wouldn't stay with the Ambassador. He wanted to get next to the people. So we hired the top 3 floors of the best hotel in downtown Ankara. And set-up a control room there that had to be staffed 24 hours a day by a Turkish speaking language officer-an American, by one of the Marine security guards and by a Secret Service special agent.

Since we only had 4 or 5 Turkish speaking officers, we spent a lot of time in that control room. There was Marty Polstein, there was myself (Marty's dead now, a nice guy), Tom Metcalf who retired a good many years ago. Who else? George Harris I think took his turn down there. I can't remember the other language officers we had. One of the USIS chaps was a language officer.

It was fun, it was interesting, it was an education to see how the mighty and the omnipotent move around the world. The person we all fell in love with was Mrs. Johnson. When the party left, the Vice President went down in the elevator, down to his car and the word came in, "Spear," that's his code word, "Spear had departed." We had the Gunny on

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duty and myself and a couple of other fellows. The Gunny knocked the head off of a bottle of whiskey and we were all having a drink.

Suddenly the door opened and somebody walked in and we heard a voice saying, "I'd like to thank you men." And we turned around and there was Mrs. Johnson. She walked around and shook hands with everyone. And said, "Now, you understand that when the Vice President and I travel we're a tremendous burden for you people. We make a mess and things get confused, it's your job to clean up after us." But she said, "I want to tell you how much we appreciate the way you do it, the way you don't complain, you're always friendly and cheerful. We really genuinely thank you." Well, as they say, there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

If she said, we make it bloody messy, we're sorry to bother you folks, we'd—sigh—drop dead lady. But here she was, she said, we make a lot of trouble and you guys clear it up. She was honest, she was candid, and she was utterly charming. And if she had been running for President, every man in that room would have voted for her. It was a brilliant performance.

Q: I know, I feel the same way having met her later, she was just wonderful.

NALLE: She picked up all the pieces.

Q: One other question that I would like to ask you about while we're talking about Turkey. Was Cyprus boiling at that time?

NALLE: Yes, very much so. I did not get involved in the Cyprus issue. It's a matter of infinite complexity. But it was very much involved with us. We were very much involved in it. It was handled by the Political Section, Charlie Tanguy was the Cyprus specialist for the embassy. As I say, I was in no way involved in the Cyprus problem.

I was working at that time, do you remember the old multilateral force idea?

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Q: I was doing that in Bonn.

NALLE: They were going to put out missiles. They were going to take the Jupes, the Jupiters out of Turkey. They were going to mount these things on a boat with a multinational crew that would sail around the world. The problem existed—Who is going to push the button? And we made it clear that no matter where the missiles were, how multilateral the crew was, we would push the button. Well it didn't get anywhere.

I was also there for the Cuban missile crisis.

Q: I wanted to ask you about that because as we know, the administration proposed apparently to take our Jupiters out of Turkey in exchange for the Soviets taking their missiles out of Cuba. How did that play there?

NALLE: That thing was frightening. It's the first time and one of the few times in my life when I have felt real heart wrenching fear. There was something, it may have been Kennedy's speech, it may have been some step we were going to take. But because of the time difference, we knew about it before the actual event took place in Washington.

And I remember Bill Dale had briefed me on it even though it had such secret security restrictions, you couldn't believe it. But he said, "There are only 2 people in the embassy right now who know about it, the Ambassador and me. I want to brief you." I guess he was being overly dramatic, I don't know. He said, "In case something goes wrong, somebody else ought to know something about it." Well I thought that was a tad silly, I don't know. But anyway it was frightening.

And I remember walking back to my house for lunch. It was a lovely day and there were some birds singing, I'm a bird watcher by hobby. I remember just being afraid that the war might begin, the first nuclear war might begin. It was a terrible, terrible experience for me.

Q: How did the Turks take it?

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NALLE: The way they always do, in a business like manner. My memory tells me, God this is a long time ago, but my memory clearly tells me that we had started discussions with the government of Turkey prior to the Cuban business, about withdrawing the Jupiter missiles. That there was no quid pro quo for the Russians in this matter.

The Jupiters were terribly old. I think it took them some 3 hours to get them actually in the air from a cold start. And if they were in their intermediate position it still took an hour to get them to fly. And you never could tell if they were going to blow up on the pad or anything else. So I'm convinced that my memory serves me right, we had entered into serious negotiations prior to the missile crisis. Then we also offered, this is kind of interesting, in return for the removal of the Turks, we agreed that we would keep an SSBM on station within the general Eastern Med region. Once again this is a long time ago and my memory is vague, but I'm pretty certain that that is the case. We even brought in, I think it was the Sam Houston, to Izmir harbor and offered to take Turks out on board for a demonstration. Just so they could see how effective, how powerful these vessels were.

Q: And see those missiles on board.

NALLE: And see those missiles on board The Turks weren't interested.

Q: They were not?

NALLE: No. They had a funny attitude. We used to laugh about them and say that the old Turkish generals were convinced that the submarine would go down under water, sail submerged the length of the Mediterranean, through Gibraltar and back to the United States without telling us. They might have been right for all I know.

Q: Well, you certainly had an interesting beginning of your career, both in Washington and in Turkey. Now I notice that your next move was to something quite different, East Africa. Was this a request or by direct assignment?

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NALLE: In September of 1953, I was in my office on a Friday afternoon getting ready to go on a camping trip with Sheila and the children along the Black Sea coast. I'd signed up for 2 weeks vacation, we had tents and stuff in the car. The phone rang, it's Bob Barnes, the DCM. He said, "Beau are you sitting down?" I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "I'll read you a cable." Which said I was to depart post immediately, go through the counterterrorism course. Do you remember that?

Q: Yes, I took one.

NALLE: Take the counterterrorism course and was assigned as Officer-in-Charge of Uganda affairs. I said to Bob, "My God, where is it?" He said, "I'm not sure but I think it's in East Africa." He said, "Come down and we'll talk about it." He was a superb DCM, a wonderful man, Bob Barnes. We chatted a little bit about it. "Look," he said, "I think it's a good job." He said, "I think you probably ought to do it." But he said, "If you don't want to do it then I'm more than willing to call the Department and fight for your assignment." But I said, what the hell, let's give it a shot.

So I went back and entered into 8 years of my life that I spent wrestling with Uganda.

Q: And not only Uganda I gather, didn't you also have Kenya and Tanzania at times?

NALLE: From time to time, just as backup. We had Paul O'Neill who's the Kenya Desk Officer and a guy by the name of Johnnie Meagher was Tanzania Desk Officer. We had a wonderful office.

We had Jesse McKnight for Office Director who was a super guy. Another man I rank very highly in my list of fine, fine people. He'd worked in the Department of Labor for many years and wasn't much on Foreign Affairs. But knew how Washington worked. It was maybe McCarthy or at least McCarthy's minions, he told to go to hell, one time. He was Director of East African Affairs, Ed Mulcahy was Deputy Director, Wen Coote was there.

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We had some wonderful people. And I learned from them a lot about how the Department operates.

Soapy Williams was Assistant Secretary for African Affairs. A fascinating man and I think people are a little unfair to Williams, they kind of laughed and joked at him a little bit.

Q: He took an interest in African Affairs.

NALLE: He took a great interest in it. He was a decent human being. He was a funny human being. He was a square dance caller among other things. He would hire, with the vast money that he had in his bank account, he would hire a hillbilly band to come in to the upstairs reception rooms in the State Department and give parties for the African diplomats and we'd all do square dances.

The Africans were just utterly dumb-founded. They simply could not believe that this very senior official in the State Department would come in a red and white bandanna shirt and cowboy boots, and would be calling these tribal dances. We poor Desk Officers were called in on-duty, there's no getting out of it. You took your wife and you went, babysitter or no babysitter.

Q: Dosey doe.

NALLE: It was kind of fun. Sheila got a very real kick out of it. Eventually the Africans sort of came to enjoy it. It was a side of America that was a little different.

Q: That's right, that they wouldn't normally see.

NALLE: Exactly right. I think the idea that such a senior official could engage in such, what they thought perhaps, undignified, unofficial behavior gave them a little more education about what this country of ours is all about. A little bit, it was no big thing, but it was another piece they would fit into the mosaic.

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Q: Now when you took over, Uganda had recently become independent, did it not?

NALLE: Yes, they'd been independent for just a year. The tragedy of Uganda is that Tanzania or Tanganyika in those days and then Kenya, had so much to offer. They came very close to unifying the 3 African states.

Uganda had an excellent school system, there were school fees charged but they were very modest. And just about every kid, boy or girl, in the country received an education through the 6th grade. They had a competent, and relatively speaking, honest bureaucracy. Purely Uganda, there were no white British officials left.

Q: None left in the country.

NALLE: Not a lot. Mike Davis, a very dear friend of mine, was the Director of the Uganda Institute of Public Affairs. Which was a quasi-government job. He had been District Commissioner in Acholi and he was the last British DC.

But the civil service itself was purely Ugandan. This mind you from a country where there were at least 14 significant tribal vernacular languages spoken. Where the Prime Minister would on occasion speak through an interpreter to his own people.

Yet they had a very effective civil service—a good school system, the judiciary was honest. There were foreigners on the Supreme Court, on the High Court—there was a Cypriot Turk, there was a Brit—but the court became Ugandanized eventually.

The police force was honest and efficient and well trained. There were 2 or 3 British technical specialists with the police force. There was a ballistic man, there was a fingerprint man, but there was nobody in the actual line of command in the police force. One felt comfortable with the police. Even in those days, one did not feel comfortable with the army.

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The army was a very real problem, both the officers and the enlisted men came largely from one tribe in Northern Uganda called the Acholi. They're up on the North along the Nile, right up to the Sudan border. The Acholis were basically very nice people. They're big people, they're strong, tall. I'd often thought they'd make wonderful swimmers, long arms and long legs. But they were recruited in the army both for officer and enlisted personnel. In spite of the efforts of the British, they became very aggressive, fairly ill disciplined, very much interested in furthering their own affairs.

Q: Let's go back and see.

NALLE: But I don't want to get into the country of Uganda without going over some of the goings on, the activities in the 4 years that I spent as Uganda Desk Officer prior to going to Kampala as Political Officer. Because it was a very interesting and informative period in my life.

Among other things, we went through the anguish and the chaos of the turmoil of the murder of President Kennedy and his subsequent funeral. We had a delegation from Uganda, actually it was the Vice President, who happened to be in town on a Leader Grant. So I had to shepherd him around and that was very interesting.

But being a Desk Officer is one of the 2 or 3 basic ultimate jobs that every FSO has to go through. I found it very interesting for the most part, a good job, a useful job. Although there were times when I got pretty thoroughly tied down by the rigidity of it. By the rigidity of the whole State Department structure.

I didn't for a minute, for example, want to or felt that I should have the right to go up and see the Deputy Under Secretary or even the Assistant Secretary at anytime. But I felt terribly constrained and I think all of us did. That we weren't being very well utilized.

I was there when we went through the change to the Country Director system. I guess this shows the resilience or the rigidity of the bureaucracy. Because we were told that this new

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system was instituted, that things were going to be much better. That there would be a kind of a river running along with a series of smaller rivers running into it and the collective knowledge would work its way up to the 6th floor. Bugger all happened, there was not one jot nor tittle difference from the old system. A lot of us got pretty cynical about it. We also learned all of us, and I suppose this is only human, how much coincidence, personality, the old-boy network, how much all of these things influence your day-to-day activities.

And I guess in the private world of business, in that great free enterprise system that we all bow down to, I guess the same thing applies.

But one learned that there were certain people up in the Executive Secretariat to whom one could go to get something through in a hurry. One also learned that there were people in the Executive Secretariat who were far more interested in telling you how important they were than they were in getting your paper into the Secretary's office for his meeting with the Ugandan Ambassador.

There were periods of enormous frustration. So much also depended on the whims and fancies. And indeed I might even say the political orientations of ones' superiors. One expects obviously the Secretary of State and those of his immediate suite, will reflect the political beliefs and ideals of the man who appointed him, the President. And that's as it should be. But I got a little startled, my impression is that the situation has gotten worse, at how far down this went.

Q: But clearly, you must have known that Soapy Williams is a power in the Democratic party.

NALLE: Indeed I did. I don't point this particular finger at Soapy. I did think a couple of his deputies, Tasca and—that old bald fellow from Baltimore, what the hell was his name—didn't know Africa from Siberia. Bill something or other.

Q: Not Bill Trimble.

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NALLE: Yeah, right. I mean Trimble didn't know a thing about Africa. Anyway, Wayne Fredericks on the opposite extreme, was sort of more a loyalist than the king, more royalist I mean than the king.

My impression is that this is very much the case now in the Department. That this polarization has seeped its way, along with the political appointment, to positions of Office Director and so on. That the political polarization had become substantially worse. And this is a very sad state of affairs.

But all-in-all the Desk Officer job was a fascinating one. The hours were long, the strain on my family was immense, I was probably drinking too much from time to time. At the same time in spite of the excitement, the occasional vibrancy, there was also a feeling of wheels spinning.

Certainly I got the impression that there was an awful lot of attention from time to time to form and not all that much attention to substance. An otherwise excellent paper would frequently be sent back at vast waste of time, to correct a very minor typographical error. Now if I were a principal up in the top floor, I would much rather get the paper early so that I could have the chance to look at it than to worry that "weird" was misspelled, that "i" didn't come before "e" or that a sentence in a paragraph by mistake got indented. But no, it would be sent back and some secretary, because we didn't have any of the word processing machines in those days, some secretary would have to retype the whole damned thing.

This irritated the hell out of me. I guess it's a reflection of my own personality to some extent. I'm not the world's tidiest nor am I the world's most efficient individual but I just felt that. I used to laugh at the ponderous words we used: You may wish to tell the Foreign Minister that he's got holes in his head. I mean why don't we just say, our policy is so-and-so and you should tell the Minister this, period. And if Secretary Rusk doesn't like that, he won't do it. Anyway, that's enough.

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The Desk Officer job was interesting but very frequently awfully frustrating. And these never ending collection of clearances on one thing and another. Clearances that frequently meant nothing at all because people would just override them.

Anyway, so after 4 years as Uganda Desk Officer, I went to Kampala as Political Officer. And began what I think are among the 4 of the happiest years of my life. I count 3 periods in my life as being truly periods of great joy: the 3 years in Roberts College, the 4 years in Kampala, and the 4 years as Consul General in Izmir, Turkey later on.

We had a good team at the Embassy. A man by the name of Henry Stebbins was the Ambassador. He had formerly been Ambassador to Nepal, he was the first American ambassador to Kathmandu. He was Harvard College, class of 1920 something or other. A man of great personal dignity and self-assurance. A man with no African experience and I don't think any particular strong feelings about Africa.

But a man who knew what an ambassador was all about. A man who knew when to step in and do something, and when to step back and let his staff do it. A man who would listen to advice, accept it or reject it quickly with good reasons. A man with a delightful wife who expected certain things from her staff but who was not overpowering at all. Who was always very nice about asking and not telling, thanking and not ignoring when the job was done.

We lived in a gorgeous house. One of the things I always felt about the Bureau of African Affairs, was that more than any other bureau I had served in, they take care of their people. Housing was very good in Kampala. The AFEX people, Greg Kryza and the others, were constantly looking for ways to make it better.

Our Embassy itself was relatively small. We were limited by the Ugandan government to a total of 15 people, not including the AID mission, the Ugandans were not dumb enough to

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cut back on that, it was feeding them. It did include Agency people, it did not include USIS. We had a small, I think effective, USIS operation in Kampala.

We had Agency people, we had 2 in the Embassy. One was declared. I would say on the whole, they were very capable people. To the best of my knowledge they were very good team players. I'm not aware of anytime where an Agency guy was out wheeling and dealing, that the ambassador didn't know about it.

Ambassador Stebbins was very firm with his Station people, he'd never let them get out of control. And he told them that he wasn't going to take any nonsense from them. They respected him, I think, and it made the working relationship easier. They knew what their lines were and they followed them.

We had some very good people there. One of the guys was Chief of the Consular Section. We didn't have a tremendous burden of consular work but there was enough. He worked damn hard at it and he was a good consular officer. He said it was worth his while to do it because it was excellent cover. He could travel around and see people and stuff that as a political officer or economic officer, he couldn't do.

Ritchey was the DCM, a wonderful fellow, he died about 6, 7 months ago and I was very sad to see it happen. Of course Ambassador Stebbins' mysterious death at sea, is something to this day I don't understand. I suspect it was a heart attack and that he, a man of 6'4", had toppled overboard.

But we had a good Embassy. A pretty good AID mission, Will Muller was the AID Director, and I have enormous respect for Will.

It so happened that I spent a period of 14 months as Chargé D'affaires between ambassadors. Stebbins retired, Ambassador Ferguson, a political appointee wasn't appointed, didn't arrive until 14 months later. During that 14 months when I was running the Embassy, Will Muller who was several grades my superior and a good many years

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older than I am, was a model player on the country team and all of that. He never tried to override me, he never tried to pull rank on me, he never tried to play the big boss or anything like that. He accepted me as if I had been an Ambassador. It made my job so infinitely much easier and my respect and affection for Will is very deep as a result of that.

We had some problems. One of the young AID employees had his girlfriend come to visit and she got tired of staying in a hotel and moved in with him. I was waited upon by a delegation of angry AID wives who wanted me to put an end to that situation. I refused to do it. I said that it did not appear to me that this was giving the Embassy a bad name. I didn't hear any loose talk or gossip around town. I got around town a hell of a lot. I didn't hear anybody commenting about it. They were not flaunting their relationship. I said until such time that it becomes a public problem, it's none of my damned business what the guy does, what he and his girlfriend do. The ladies were not happy. But I talked it over with Will Muller and he said, "Yeah, they'd come to me and I told them I'm not going to get involved in it."

We had a very well run operation. We had good relations with the government although Obote was a difficult man to get along with. We had good relations with the other diplomatic missions there. We were very close to the Israelis and obviously close to the Brits.

We were there during the days of ping-pong diplomacy and as we had both the Chinese and the Soviet Embassies in town, it was absolutely fascinating when I was told that I was at liberty to speak to the Chinese. I went to whoever it was at parties, and one thing or another, we'd chat about the weather, Ugandan food and utterly insignificant matters and occasionally venture into policy matters. The minute it was over, Dmitri Safanov, the Soviet, would come up to me, "What did he tell you? What was he saying?" I'd say, "Oh Mr. Ambassador, we were just joking together." "You were talking to him about NATO matters. You were talking to him about Russian policy in Africa." It was hysterical, it was worth the price of admission alone.

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Q: Was this the period when Idi Amin threw Obote out?

NALLE: It began.

Q: Did you see it coming?

NALLE: Yeah, everybody saw it coming. It was like an express train coming down the track. It was not subtle. Uganda at the time of independence had a functioning multiparty government. There was Obote's party, the Uganda People's Congress, the UPC. There was the opposition, the Democratic Party led by a very dear friend, Alex Latim.

And there was a regional grouping of the Buganda tribe, the Baganda people who were the dominant tribe in Uganda and who lived around the Kampala area called the Kabaka Yeka—the Kabaka alone. And all 3 of those parties essentially functioned in parliament.

Obote was becoming more and more authoritarian, more and more vaguely leftist, although I pretty consistently refused to call it leftist. I said it was nationalism, fuzzy head London School of Economics socialism, that kind of stuff. He had a lot of young kids who did have an LSE degree and they reflected that attitude. The London School was well known in the 50s, 60s, and 70s and I think was pretty harmless. If you'd ever suggested to those people that they ought to be real socialists, they'd turn pale with horror.

The army role was growing ever larger. About a year before Amin took over the government, somebody took a potshot at Dr. Obote at the Annual National Congress of the UPC—shot him right through the mouth. The army went amuck. And for about 12 hours it was a pretty horrifying situation. There was no Ambassador, I was Charg#.

It was frightening. They beat up American citizens, they killed a fair number of people, they beat up Brits, there was a strong anti-foreign element in it. There was a strong anti-white element in it. And as I said, it lasted for about 12 hours. I take some pride in having been able to get a formal, written apology from the GOU for all of this.

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Amin cut and run. Jumped out the back window of his house in his pajamas and disappeared. Which really mystified us all. Why did he run? We thought he was going to make his move one of these days. Why did he do what he did? We spent a lot of time pondering that.

I was a member of an institution called the Uganda Club. Which was set-up as an answer to the all-British, all-white Kampala Club. I was one of 2 white members of this particular club. Everyone from the Prime Minister to the Cabinet to the Governor was a member and Ugandan. I made it a habit of stopping in there and having a couple of beers every night. The drinking that went on at the Uganda was mind boggling, just unbelievable.

You could be assured of meeting 2 or 3 Cabinet ministers anytime you went up there. I used to take newspaper people there who were thrilled with it. What's his name? Apple, Charlie Mohr, a whole bunch of them I would take there and they loved it.

But one evening after this happened, Amin appeared at the Club. In full uniform with 6 of his senior officers, with sidearms. Everyone was sitting around, laughing and joking. I was at the bar. Suddenly I heard the whole Club go silent. I was wondering, what was going on? I walked out of the bar and there was Amin, a huge man, an enormous fellow, with his officers with their weapons. Sitting in the main lounge, sitting at attention, not talking just looking around. I thought, Jesus, what's going to happen. They sat there for about half an hour, and then Amin said something in one of the local languages, and they all got up and walked out.

What it was, I'm convinced to this day, was a threat on the part of Amin at reestablishing his position. Because he knew that he was laughed at because he ran away. This was his reprisal, his counter-threat. And it worked. People were scared to death.

Relations got worse and worse between Amin and Obote. A senior army officer was murdered. He was taking a bath on his front porch. It was an old fashioned town, he was

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sitting out there scrubbing himself, humming away. A land rover drove by, boom boom, and that was the end of Brigadier Okoya. He was one of the senior Acholi officers who were opposed to Amin.

On the night of January 24th, I had Fred Hadsel and Bob Moore visiting me. Sheila and I gave a reception at our house to which we invited mostly Americans because I'd had some complaints from the American community that when hotshot visitors from Washington came through, I did nothing but entertain Ugandans. I said, well goddamn it, that's what I'm here for. I'm here to entertain Ugandans, not Americans. But still and all, in this particular case we did invite mostly Americans.

It was all over around 11:00. Fred had left, that's right, Fred had flown that afternoon after a tennis game down to Nairobi. So it was just Bob. I took him back to the hotel where he was staying, I got back to the house around midnight. A friend of mine who was the Dean of the School of Agriculture at the University, called me and said, "Can you hear machine gun fire?" I said, "Let me step out on the porch." I went out on the balcony and heard the tat-tat-tat all over the city.

And that was it. Obote was out of town at the Commonwealth Conference in Singapore. We all felt when Obote left—the Station Chief, the Israelis—we were all pretty much in agreement, that Obote felt he was in command of things or else he wouldn't have gone off to Singapore. But he did.

And Amin took over the government. I would say inside of 3 days, the killing began and it never stopped. The first people he killed were 6 Canadian missionaries. It didn't get much publicity.

We had about, I forget what our E&E plan said, we had about 800, maybe a thousand Americans in the country. I put in the hold fast in the home system and to my delight and

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pleasure it worked. We had a notification, a network of radios and stuff, and by-golly the system worked, which surprised me a lot.

There was a tourist group in town and they were a problem because they thought they were important and wanted to get out of town. I said to them, "Look the airport is closed." And later the tour leader turned to me and said, "Well Mr. Nalle, these are important people, they haven't got time to wait around, they're going to miss their connections in Nairobi." I said, "You're damn right they're going to miss their connections in Nairobi, and they're going to get hungry, they're going to get tired, they're going to get dirty and they're going to want to get their laundry done. And it's not going to be done. Because I don't see any chance of these folks leaving for 4 or 5 days." And that was just the case. They were furious.

One guy, the president of this big liquor distributing company in Hartford, CT., Highblood or Hugh Blind or something, he beat me about that on the head and shoulders. He had to get back to sign a contract. I said, "You can't do it. There are soldiers at the airport who will kill you." He kind of walked away scratching his head.

It was funny if it hadn't been serious. But the killings went on and they never stopped.

Q: What attitude did we take to that?

NALLE: Another interesting thing, goddamn there are so many interesting things about this. I was able to get up that night when I heard the firing, got the Deputy Station Chief who lived fairly close to me, and we drove into the office. We didn't get back to our homes for over 48 hours. We were at the office and we turned on the radio, South African broadcasting had it already within 3 hours after the coup. BBC came in about 6 or 7 hours later and VOA was tail-light charlie as usual.

I called the OPS Center and was able to get out one phone call message. I thought of sending a Critic message but I thought, this is not critic material. You know, Uganda and

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the United States, come on. So I just telephoned the Operations Center and told them what happened. Then all the phones went out and we lost communications completely.

The only thing we did have was a voice-radio with Embassy Nairobi. And bless his heart, dear old Alan Lukens was DCM in Nairobi and every afternoon for about 2 weeks around 4:00 the radio would crackle and it was Luke calling up to know how we were and did we need anything. That was our only communication for about 2 days. Then the communications guys did get things set-up so we could send messages out and receive messages on a limited basis.

The coup took place on a Sunday night. Ambassador Ferguson was away, knowing that Obote was going to Singapore. He went up to Switzerland to put his older daughter in school in Lausanne and take a week's vacation to go skiing. So again I was in-charge of the place. The Station Chief was away, it was his Deputy that I was doing business with. I mean when Obote took off, everybody took off.

So anyway, the coup took place on a Sunday night. And I think it was Tuesday, I got a message from Newsom, David Newsom, saying that we were going to recognize the government. That we recognize countries not governments. That there would be no question, that the issue would not come up. We would not make a formal statement saying that we recognize the government. If asked, we would say that the diplomatic relations had never been broken, they continue on. In retrospect I wonder if we should have done that, but everybody is smarter the day after.

Then I got a message from Amin's principal private secretary, saying that he was convening the Heads of Missions that afternoon and wanted me to attend. I called Dick Slater, the British High Commissioner, and Ohran Ofri, the Israeli Ambassador, and I think I may even have called the Russian but I'm not sure. I said, are you going to the meeting? And they all said, yes. So I went along without consulting Washington. I operated on the

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theory that Washington put me there cause they thought I could do the job and goddamn it, I'm going to do it.

So I went along and it was a very brief meeting. Amin was pretty articulate, I mean, to digress a minute. Amin was everything people said he was. He was a murderer, he was a racist, he was a thug, a bully, a sadist, quite possibly a cannibal, but people don't face up to the fact that also he was a very shrewd political manipulator.

He just met with us for no more than 10 minutes. He said he wanted relations to continue between his government and all of us. That he was not taking sides to the East-West strife. I remember the Soviet looked over at me and smiled. The Soviets have a sense of humor. That he would continue to look to Great Britain. Dick Slater groaned at that one. It was pretty routine and we all left. I was able to report on it. Then he announced his new Cabinet which had some pretty competent people in it.

The next day I got a message from Slater, the Brit, saying that he had just received a message from Amin that he wanted a one-on-one. And that Amin had mentioned that he was also going to ask me to come in for a one-on-one. The Israelis, because the Israelis had a huge aid program in Uganda in those days, Amin said he wanted the Israelis to come in. Dick had given me a little tip-off. Well in that case I thought I had better talk to the Department. So I called David Newsom. The phone service was getting a lot better or maybe I used the radio, I forget. But anyway I got through to Operations Center and Newsom. And he told me to go to the meeting, listen and say as little as possible. He said make no commitments whatsoever. Which I did.

Amin wanted us to get into the military assistance program and he wanted us to double our economic assistance. And specifically he wanted helicopters and airplanes that could fly to Dar-Es-Salaam and return without refueling. Also that he wanted to join NATO. The guy was off the wall a lot of times. He wanted to join NATO and he was also thinking of joining the Warsaw Pact and in this way (yes, yes, this comes back to me now), by being

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both a member of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, he could be a balancing act between the 2 super powers. Which was a lovely thought.

Q: What were his relations with his East African neighbors? Kenya and Tanganyika?

NALLE: Pretty bad. The East African Federation was a dead duck by then. But even so, they looked at him as a kind of a clown. Although it's interesting there was always an element in Africa and Uganda that supported Amin because he kicked out the whites. A lot of Africans looked up on him because he beat up on white people.

A very good friend of mine and a distinguished professor at Makerere Univ, a university professor, political science man named Ali Mazrui, he was a Kenyan from Lamu island. He was a very bright guy, a distinguished Ph.D. from some American university. He wrote a book. He wrote several books. But one of the points in his book, or his long article after the takeover, was that Amin was doing a good thing in kicking out the Asians, and in beating up on the whites, and one thing or another. I happened to run into Ali after I was back here in Washington. I said, "Ali, that's just disgusting. You should be ashamed of yourself."

But anyway, then things really started deteriorating. Deaths increased. One man I remember was the Director of the police band. We were at that time planning to send him, I mean before the takeover, we had permission from the commandant and the police to send him to the InterLachen festival at Michigan, where he could get a summer learning band techniques. The police had an excellent band. This guy was a good musician. He graduated from some British band school in the UK and we'd just polish him up a little bit. He was a first class musician. He got beaten to death with re-bar because he was from another tribe.

The son of a very good friend of mine, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, the Permanent Secretary's son was an officer in the army. The night Amin took over the government, he ran away. Then realized that he'd have to come back sooner or later. He went to see his father. His father counseled him that he should go

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back and see Amin and try to make his peace. He said that he would go along and support him. They met Amin and Amin said, "That's all right my friend, you go back and you join your unit. We'll forget it all." The father said, thank God, and he left. Three days later they started discovering bits and pieces of this young boy chopped up around the barracks.

One of his favorite tricks was to handcuff a person to the steering wheel of an automobile, set the car on fire, and push it down the road. It went on and on. The strain on us was just unbelievable. You talk to Bob Keeley about it at some time. It was never ending.

There was curfew. I had to go out at night one time and one of the Ugandan army armored personnel carriers came down the street. The lids were open and there were people sitting on it looking around with their—they didn't have AKs, no they had a few AK47s, but it was mostly that FN, that NATO gun, the rifle with Fabrique Nationale from Belgium they got from the Australians curiously.

Anyway, you talk about scared. I was able to walk in behind a telephone pole, in some bushes and just lay there shaking. Another time, I was up North with one of the members of the staff, about 2 months after the revolution. I wanted to go to Ochoi country because they were anti-Amin, they were the wrong tribe. And a guy cut loose on us with a burst of automatic fire from his weapon. Which was another unpleasant experience. But it was like that constantly.

Sheila and the children were under terrible strain. There was a fire fight that took place outside our house. We had a lovely house there. I was away on a business trip. I think it was while I was up North getting shot at up there. A fire fight took place outside our house between gangsters and soldiers.

And Sheila and the children literally spent the night in the bathtub. That was about the safest place as any. When I came home from the trip, there were bullet holes in our house. It was stone. It was rough. It was very, very rough.

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Q: No congressional visits during that period?

NALLE: Not the immediate period, they came later on.

One American who went up North and nearly got killed, was Nick Stroh, from Stroh beer people in Detroit. He was an awfully nice guy. A stringer for a couple of the U.S. newspapers, just starting out on the world of newspapers. He represented a Tampa newspaper, he represented a couple of small papers from Michigan, he was stringing for the Kansas Star, is it?

Q: Kansas City Star.

NALLE: Kansas City Star, yeah. He went away on a trip, this was in July, and he left on a Wednesday in his car, went out into the western part of the country. I didn't know.

Q: Alone or with an interpreter?

NALLE: With a friend. You didn't use interpreters much in Uganda, most people, you get enough English to get by. I never used an interpreter.

With a friend from the faculty at the Makerere College, an American professor of sociology. He didn't tell me he was going. If he had, I would have tried desperately to talk him out of it because it was not a safe area to be in. But he just went. His wife, Gerda, came and told me this and I said, oh God. He said he would be back Thursday. Thursday rolled by and he never showed up, she came to me. Nothing happened. I started looking around, I talked to police, I talked to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Ferguson put out calls through his sources.

Then we were due to leave on Sunday. On Saturday when we should have been finishing our packing, I got an anonymous phone call from a town out in the western region. That 2

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white men had been seen being driven around in an army automobile with an army officer driving and someone was beating these guys up. And the phone hung up.

And this is where we really went out of our minds. I went to every Ugandan, every source I had built up in the course of 8 years working in that country, people who were in the habit of sitting down and having long open candid conversations. They'd look at me and say, "Beau, don't ask. Please don't ask me because, just don't ask." Windows were shut in my face, doors slammed in my face. And we left, Sheila, the kids and I left the following Sunday morning.

And Nick Stroh's body was found. Bob Keeley and Ferguson went through hell. But eventually there was an investigation mounted and a British high judge wrote his report, dropped it at the registered mail envelope of the post office and drove directly out of the country. He never went back to Uganda again. Because it pointed a finger directly at Amin and his troops.

And after I left, things got even worse. The Asians were kicked out. It was sad because Uganda was a beautiful, lovely little country. God damn, I spent 8 years working on that place. It was absolutely fascinating.

Q: Was this entirely the cause of Amin or were there others?

NALLE: I don't know of any other real cause that you could say, other than Amin's personal ambition. I mean, he was an incredible character. I was up at the Club one evening when there were problems in India. Mrs. Gandhi was Prime Minister and was having difficulties with her Parliament I mentioned this to Amin and he chuckled, "Who wouldn't with all those bloody Asians?" he asked.

Q: Well Beau, after your Ugandan adventure where did fate take you next?

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NALLE: Well, I left Uganda with very real sorrow. It was a country that I had grown to understand to some extent. I knew a great deal about it. I could see only clouds, clouds, clouds on the horizon.

Q: Excuse me, how could you say that you left there with sorrow when you'd just been telling us about the horrors that the Amin regime was perpetrating. Wouldn't you be glad to leave?

NALLE: Well that's true, that's very true. I was desperately glad.

My last weekend in Uganda, instead of packing, well not my last weekend because my last weekend was trying to find poor old Nick Stroh. The weekend before that I had been invited by Amin to come along as his personal guest while he was going out on a political tour of the eastern province. And so I spent 2 days and 2 nights bouncing around in a Land Rover, drinking banana beer with General Amin while he gave political speeches in the villages. That part, aside from the curiosity, I don't miss.

What I do miss are the many many Ugandans whom we came to know and like and considered to be truly close friends. Who are dead. What I do miss is a little African country that had so many prospects for a bright future. A little African country that at one time had an active, vibrant democratic political system.

What I do miss is the university of African professors where you could go and have spirited, happy go lucky, beer-sodden times talking politics and solving the problems of the world. That's the sort of thing I miss from Uganda. And the magnificent game parks which are completely destroyed now. And the superb wildlife and birds, those are the things you miss.

Q: I think I can understand that. Now from there where?

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NALLE: From there I spent a year at the Newport Rhode Island at the National War College. Which was not particularly taxing intellectually but a very restful and happy year for the whole family.

And useful for me in that it confirmed in my mind, a number of theories I've long held about the American professional military people. Namely that there is no such thing as a typical American military officer. And I say thank God for that. There is no military class in the United States. The bulk of these people, the career officers, still maintain a strong identity as a civilian. They are the ones who are most opposed to the development of a military class. I was pleased at the ability that these men, now these are guys that are expected to move ahead in the navy, the army, the air force and the coast guard. I was very impressed at their ability. This is not a do it by the numbers, hut two three four, kind of an operation. These are some very damn bright men and women. So all in all, it was a happy and pleasant year.

I recall some less than happy moments when one of my colleagues from the National War College came up. Mind you, this was when Vietnam was on our minds and very active. We got to arguing about it and this fellow said, "Well, you know, 98% of the people in the United States are opposed to our Vietnam policy." And my military colleagues looked at each other with shock and amazement. And I said to him, "Gordon, you're as full of shit as a Christmas goose. A vast number of American people for better or for worse vigorously support the Vietnam policy."

And then we got going with the military who were talking about how many of them oppose the policy. And it was a very interesting experience but my colleague did not show any sense of political awareness of what was going on in the United States.

Anyway, it was a good year. And from there I went to Liberia, which was a horse of a different color.

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Q: Another part of Africa?

NALLE: West Africa. Uganda, among other things being 4,000 feet high had a very pleasant climate. Liberia being about 3 feet high, had a just vile climate—hot hot hot humid humid humid.

The Liberians, I am sorry to say, are just not very nice people. The so called America-Liberian class I found extraordinarily difficult to get along with. I found the corruption, the mental and the moral, as well as the fiduciary corruption, to be overwhelming.

The bitterness that exists between the city of Monrovia and the rest of the country is very unpleasant. I think Liberia is probably the only, or was the only country in the world, where the legislature still passed laws which were applicable only to, and I quote “the tribal elements that remain within the country” unquote.

Doing political work was extremely difficult.

Q: Excuse me, what was your position there?

NALLE: I was head of the Political Section. I was very carefully told that I was not to call myself Political Counselor. But I was Chief of the Political Section.

Sam Westerfield was the Ambassador, he died 2 days after I arrived of a heart attack. His place was eventually taken by Ambassador Mel Manfull. He was Chief of Mission the whole 2 years I was there.

Housing in the Mission and the Embassy in Monrovia was not good. Monrovia was the only place I ever lived on an Embassy compound. Whatever the advantages might have been, and I never perceived them, they were totally outweighed by the disadvantages. The thought that anybody might pop in for a plate of tea or a sip of whisky was ridiculous. When you had to get through Marine guards, when you had to wander around through the

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compound with only Americans there, children and one thing or another. It simply cut you off from any reasonable contact. There was no reason for it. FBO if they wanted to, could have found some houses. I don't see much that justifies compound living anywhere in the world. Why we have it in the developed world, in Western Europe, I can't for the life of me understand.

Q: But certainly wouldn't it have been useful later when Sergeant Doe took over and they had great unrest in Liberia?

NALLE: Yeah they didn't come on board the compound, that's true enough. But if you're going to sit around building up walls against somebody who may or may not takeover, you're not doing your job, I don't think.

Q: That's a good answer.

NALLE: Sergeant Doe, was a pretty nasty piece of work.

Q: What was our principal interest in Liberia during the years you were there.

NALLE: There was what the Liberians called "A Special Relationship." The Liberians being of course the descendants of the returned slaves. They called it a special relationship, we tried to call it an Historical Relationship, but we never got very far with it.

We had some fairly substantial economic investments—Sun Oil was there with a refinery; United States Steel was there with an iron mine.

Q: Firestone was there.

NALLE: Firestone was there, it had an enormous operation. I mean the General Manager of Firestone back in the 20s or the 30s was probably more important than the American ambassador. So there was the commercial and economic interest, American banks. The

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dollar was the official currency in Liberia. There was this sociological, historical relationship that existed. A massive American citizen population.

And the idea that Liberia, along with Ethiopia and of course the Republic down south, were the only countries in Africa that had not been ruled by some sort of colonial master—the French, the British, the Belgians or the Portuguese.

So for all these reasons. We also had a little military mission, we had a big embassy there. I forget how many people, all told, we had on the embassy staff. But it was big. We had the compound, we had the old building with the generators. We had the famous employee whose name was “Saturday.” That was his only name, just Saturday. And Saturday used to wander around the grounds emptying Butt cans, and for this he got paid, I guess about 200 a year U.S., I don't know. But he was the Butt can man.

I don't think I can honestly say that I predicted Sergeant Doe. I doubt that my successor did. And I'm very certain that my predecessor didn't. I think all of us, all the political officers and all the ambassadors and everyone else, felt that major change was overdue in the country but we did not foresee this outcome.

We all felt that Tolbert, who had taken over of course after Tubman died, was on the right track. But with his campaign of, what was it “Beds to Breakfast” I don't know, he had all kinds of campaigns to exhort people to rise to higher heights. That's another one of his mottos, “Higher Heights.” We all felt that he was trying his damndest to whip the system. But from what I understand, subsequent to our times there, the system whipped him. He operated I guess on the theory that: If you can't beat them, join them. Little whispers of corruption that we began to get in my day grew into a shouted chorus of corruption in the years following. And eventually led to his overthrow and brutal and tragic death. He was a nice little guy.

As far as the family was concerned, Liberia was characterized essentially by dullness. We had a pretty good American community school there, both girls were there. They

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enjoyed it. Sheila had fun because she, both in Uganda and in Liberia, was very active on the school board. I think Sheila enjoyed our years in Africa. There were things for her to do, school board work, she had done a lot of garden work around the houses we had, particularly in Kampala. I think she was fairly happy, the social burden was heavy. We had staff, in most cases incompetent and dishonest, but they were there anyway to rearrange the dirt.

So Liberia was not for me a particularly happy place. I found the work stifling. We had some good people there. David Gamon was DCM. I just saw in the newspaper that he died. Kind of a dry stick but a warm person, in spite of it all.

I was perfectly happy to leave and go back to Washington. I hadn't been there—well what 4 years in Kampala, a year at the War College, 2 years in Liberia—I hadn't been there for 7 or 8 years. We'd get the children back in American schools and I would work in the Bureau of Personnel as Chief (whatever the heck they call it) of the African assignments division in PER. Which were 2 fascinating and quite rewarding years contrary to what I thought at the beginning.

I found my years in PER very much worthwhile. Operating on the theory that if the foreign service didn't run its own personnel system, a bunch of geeks, far less competent and far less sympathetic than we were, would come in and do it for us. My job was to keep all of our posts in Africa fully staffed with superstar, overachiever, ultimate genius, soon to become ambassadors from the level of FSO-8, on up the line. Nothing but the best will suffice to be GSO in Bamako.

Q: Did you find it hard to attract people to Africa?

NALLE: No, not a bit, that was the least of my troubles. I didn't have trouble attracting people either in terms of quantity or quality. I was also responsible for staffing a couple of State Department offices, namely INR. Which is probably the hardest office to staff anywhere in the State Department system. Which is a pity because INR jobs are

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interesting, they're excellent training. People learn how to write when they're in INR and given the lack of writing skills of the youth in America today, that's something to think about. But putting people in INR was like sending them to Eastern State Penitentiary or Siberia.

But staffing Africa was not difficult. We had a wonderful bunch of people. Starting with Art Wortzel who was head of PER. The Director-General I did not think much of, but it may have been just a personality clash, it was Carol Laise. I just didn't see any bright, shining star there. I didn't see any leadership there. I think of the DG as being a job to get out, and to fight for, and to defend the foreign service while running it with a relatively iron hand. I didn't see any of that in Carol Laise.

A case in point, as I was due to leave PER for my next assignment, I was asked if I was willing to extend for a year. I said, yes. My family was enjoying Washington, I liked the work and I would be perfectly happy to stay on for a third year doing the African assignments job. So that was agreed upon.

And then one day Art Wortzel came down to me looking rather embarrassed, and said, "Beau, what would you feel if we asked you to leave the African assignments job and move over to the Junior Officer counseling and assigning branch?" And I said, "Well Art, that position's already been filled, we've got a fellow coming in to do that job. I just saw the assignment notice the other day." As I said, the position had been filled, it was an ADMIN officer, I didn't know him but I had met him, he'd even been through the briefings and one thing or another.

And Art looked even more embarrassed because he was a very principled man. He said, "Well Carol Laise is worried, this fellow has come in, as we used to say in the navy, in through the hawse pipe. He was a former staff officer and became an FSO." I said, I used the old Hebrew, Yiddish expression, "Nu? What's wrong with that? He's got

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incredible record. The guy is obviously in the top 10 among the mid-careers, below senior administrative people. This is an excellent assignment.”

Art squirmed in his chair. He said, “Carol thinks it would be more suitable if a career FSO ran the Junior Officer Program.” I said, “God damn it Art. I can't think of anything better than having a guy who started off as a FSS, counting nuts and bolts down in the general services shop, and who worked his way up the hard way. I can't think of anything better to take these young guys, who have been getting the sugar tit all their lives, and doing their assignments.” He said, “Well, Carol doesn't want it.”

In retrospect, I should have raised a bigger beef. But I said, “Ok, I'll take the job.” I was interested in it anyway. So I did the Junior Officer counseling. It was an eye-opening experience.

I had one young tiger call me from Jakarta. Using the old system, he was an FSO-6. An economic officer who was doing consular work. This very frequently happens because we need so many junior consular officers. People of political and economic value are put into the consular side of things. This kid had done very well, excellent record. He called me and said he wanted to go to an 05 economic job in Paris.

I said, well I didn't really think I could do that. I could put him in an 05 consular job in Paris. In fact, I thought I might be even able, based on his record, to get him a Section Chief job in Paris, head of the IV section or the NIV section. Because his work was good. I said, I have a lot of guys in the economic cone. This guy was in the consular cone. I said, I've got a lot of economic guys who are looking for that same job, who are in consular jobs just like you. Who've served in hardship posts, just like you.

In your cone, I'll move you up. Outside your cone, you'll have to go into an 06 economic job. He said, “But I've got a B.A. in Economics from Yale.” I made an effort not to laugh,

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but I said, that's the best I can do for you. He said, "You are ruining my career." That's the end of it, we hung up.

A month later I got a memo from the SS. There was a letter attached and it was this guy's letter of resignation. He said he blamed his whole resignation on Mr. Nalle in PER who was not interested in having him advance as rapidly as possible. It was the usual letter to the Secretary. It said: "Mr. Secretary, I should be in Washington on Friday, December 15. I still have open on my schedule anytime between 2:30 and 3:30 in that afternoon, if you'd care to talk to me." There was a query plaintive little note on this thing from the line guy in SS, who knew me, he was my usual source, he said "Beau, who is this jerk?"

But that's the way it was. Now as I look back, I see some of them taking DCM jobs and stuff. It was interesting work, I enjoyed it.

Q: Yes it was, it was interesting.

NALLE: It was rewarding work.

Q: It was rewarding and you met some very fine young people.

NALLE: Indeed. The panel I think was as good a way as I could think of, of challenge and response, between the counseling officers and the assignments officers. It was a good a way as I could think of to keep our overseas offices staffed up with good people. We worked, with occasional losses of temper, we worked very harmoniously. Even the odd loss of temper was done and over with by the time we opened up for business the next day.

Q: That's the way I remember Personnel too. Very very seldom was anything held overnight, any arguments held overnight.

After this interesting assignment in Personnel, what came next?

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NALLE: What I really wanted was Consul General in Istanbul but good old Bob Houghton took that one out of my hands. He couldn't speak a word of Turkish but that's alright.

I went down to a crazy little place in Central America called Belize. It was a strange business. Belize of course is former British Honduras and the only remaining British colony in the Western Hemisphere. I went there as Consul General, had a staff of 4 Americans and about 8 or 9 locals. And was somewhat startled.

I was told that it was an independent reporting post which meant, as I understood it, I did not have to go through London. I could report directly to Washington. That's the sort of bureaucratic double-talk that I would have been just thrilled to ignore. But anyway, after I'd been there for a couple of months, I got a copy of the famous Kennedy letter. Only in this case it was from President Carter, saying—as Chief of Mission in Belize, you have this, that—I was looking at it and said, “What? Chief of Mission in Belize?” Nobody ever told me about this. So I put it away, really didn't think much about it.

Here's good old Mother State at work again, about a week after that I got a cable, I think it may have been immediate, from Washington saying, “You will have received your copy of President Carter's letter.” I paraphrase this, “Yes,” it said, “it's true, you have the title of Chief of Mission in Belize. However, we instruct you that under no circumstances are you to use the title. Under no circumstances are you to call yourself Chief of Mission. Under no circumstances are you to advise the British or the other members of the diplomatic corps that you are Chief of Mission. You are not to use the term Chief of Mission in talking matters over with your Belizean colleagues and friends.”

It just went on and on and on. I thought, what the hell is this all about? To this day I don't know what it's all about. It totally mystifies me.

Q: Obviously the White House had sent this to all posts and since Belize was a semi-independent post, someone just sent it.

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NALLE: Well, why did they send me the original letter from Carter?

Q: That's what I mean.

NALLE: I think it's some legal connection with the fact that it's an independent or reporting post.

Q: Yes, I would think so.

NALLE: I was in the same category as Hong Kong.

Q: There may be one or two others but I'm not sure.

NALLE: Maybe one or two others but that was it.

So anyway, the reason I went to Belize, by this time I was getting old and promotions were fewer and fewer. The bird watching was good and above all in the post report inventory, I noticed the listing of a 21 foot Boston Whaler with 2-75 horsepower outboard motors on it, for use by the Consul General in the performance of his official duties. And also used by the Consul General and his wife every Saturday and Sunday to go skin diving out on the reef or to go bird watching before they do anything else.

We also at that time in Washington, had a little 20 foot Swedish built diesel powered motor sailer which I was able to ship down to Belize at very modest cost. Which we had there for the almost 3 years I spent. And we'd go off on vacation and leave instead of going off to Guatemala or going to Salvador. We'd get on the boat and go to sea for a week, up or down the barrier reef, which next to the reef in Australia, is the second longest cargo barrier reef in the world. The scuba diving and the snorkeling are just unbelievable.

Belize was a very interesting post. It is, was the last British colony in the western hemisphere. It was ruled by a "Governor and a Commander-in-Chief." A very nice old gentleman formerly of the colonial office. Who'd been born in Kenya, raised in Kenya,

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spoke Swahili and Kikuyu very fluently. An irascible Scott, we got along quite well together, Peter MacIntee.

The problem was everybody wanted Belize to be independent except Guatemala. Guatemala laid claim to the entire territory of Belize based on a treaty that had been drawn up by the then Central American state, empire I think they called it, existing in 1840 or 1835, around there. The treaty was very badly worded. I used to point out to junior officers, my staff, what would happen if you couldn't write well. You could start a war.

So based on their misunderstanding of this treaty, the Guatemalans claimed all of Belize. The question of the resolution of this problem was the so-called Belize Resolution in the UN. Every year the UN would vote that Belize should be independent. Every year the Guatemalans and a few other South Americans supporting their brothers in Guatemala City, would vote, no. For many years the U.S. vetoed the resolution.

Q: Excuse me, you said the U.S. vetoed, would it not be the British vetoed?

NALLE: No, the British wanted to get rid of Belize as fast as they could. They'd get down on their hands and knees and beg us to vote for the Belize Resolution. It had complete internal self-government.

Q: And so we had to do it.

NALLE: Because we liked the fascist military thugs that were ruling Guatemala. Even today I become angry with our military program piling money into Guatemala with those butchers that were ruining that country. The conservative elements in the US government said that we can't turn loose this good anti-communist friend of ours. And so for years we either in some cases vetoed, in some cases we merely abstained from voting, for the Belize Resolution at the UN.

Q: The Belize Resolution would not have given the territory to Guatemala would it?

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NALLE: No. It would have just said that Belize would become independent.

Q: Then the Guatemalans would assume that they could swallow it up.

NALLE: The Guatemalans would assume that they could swallow it up or at least this is what some thought. I was never convinced that the Guatemalans were going to invade. And besides the British agreed to keep their troops there. The British had 2400 troops. Part of the agreement was the British could keep using Belize as a jungle warfare training center because they could no longer use Sarawak or Borneo or any of those places. The only place in the world they had for jungle warfare training. And they'd rotate great regiments, the Black Watch, the Queen's Own Foot, and others for 6 months training exercises. And they would keep them there after independence. And they had harrier jets just to fight off the hateful Guats.

I mean, it struck me as the United States government and the State Department at its worst. Because these butchers in Guatemala city were "anti-communists." There was some thought that George Price might be little bit on the left-side himself.

Q: I think there was.

NALLE: George Price was gay. That's the only problem with poor old George Price. He used to go out to Miami and cruise from time to time. But everybody overlooked that, that was his business not ours.

I worked so hard along with Jim Cheek who then was Deputy Assistant in NRA. And John Blacken was Director of ARACEN. The 3 of us worked desperately to get us to change our position on the Belize Resolution up at the UN. Finally, by God, we finally did it. In October of 1980.

Q: It became independent in 1981.

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NALLE: That's right. Then I left 3 weeks after that.

And narcotics was the other problem. This was when I first really faced the narcotics problem. It was unbelievable: overflights, illegal aircraft. We didn't have a narcotics man in Belize. He came over from Guatemala, he came over about once a month. It was primarily marijuana but more and more there was evidence that it was becoming a transit point for cocaine from South America. And more and more it was obvious that senior members of the government, Belize government not the British, were involved in it and it was a very difficult matter. Also, the Nicaraguan situation was degenerating.

We had a plane land, I get called out to the airport. It was an American twin Beech I think it was, with 2 guys in the cockpit who didn't have pilots licenses, didn't have drivers' licenses, didn't have credit cards or passports. They had lots of cash, U.S. dollars cash. The aircraft itself had no aircraft log, it had no air maintenance log, it had no airframe log, it had no engine log. There were no tail numbers on the aircraft. There was nothing. Just these 2 guys with no identification. And an aircraft that couldn't be traced, all the numbers had been filed off.

Q: And they were American?

NALLE: Oh yeah, couldn't have been more so, straight out of Mississippi or Alabama, nice bunch of guys. Like this fellow who got shot down in Nicaragua. Do you remember?

Q: Oh yes I do.

NALLE: He was the same kind of guy.

Q: What did you do with them?

NALLE: I wanted to throw them in jail. The Belize government said, what the hell, let them go. Money probably passed hands out at the airport, I'm sure. They said they were lost.

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Q: The plane was searched, I take it.

NALLE: The plane was searched, there was nothing in it. As I said, I think money passed hands. The Belizeans let them go, they said, "We've got no reason to hold them." I said, what do you mean you've got no reason to hold them? These guys are as illegal as they can be. They said, no, the plane's all right. So off they went.

About 4 days later a cable came in from San Jose. Saying that a twin Beech with new Panamanian identification numbers. Two Americans—it was obviously the same aircraft—had crashed in the mountains in Northern Costa Rica, just on the edge of the Nicaraguan border and some 500 rifles and a half a million rounds of ammunition had been discovered.

Q: A prominent press story.

NALLE: A prominent press story. The plane at that time had had a tail number painted on it in Panama. Which was untraceable. They go down along with this stuff in Costa Rica and had crashed flying north from Panama to Nicaragua. It was a crazy place.

Another time a plane landed at Belize International airport. It requested emergency landing, engine problems. Here's one of these good old Southern boys. Superb pilots, unbelievable pilots, they're so good. He was sitting there behind the wheel, a mechanic was working on his engine. The mechanic, I knew him, a U.S. citizen who was a drug smuggler himself but we never did catch him.

I think the only honest policeman in the country of Belize was on duty at the airport at the time. He came out and looked over the airplane. And back in the after section of the aircraft, were a whole lot of garbage bags very neatly wrapped up and tied with tape. And the policeman turned and said, "Hey man, what that? Give me one man." And the pilot went back and got one for him. The guy opened it up, it was very neatly baled marijuana. And the fellow said to the pilot, "Man you've got about 5000 kilos of pot in the back of your

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aircraft.” The pilot turned around and he looked at the policeman and said, “Son of a bitch, where do you suppose that came from?”

He stayed 2 days in jail. Our consular officer, Bernie Gross, was down in the jail talking to him. And a guy, Bernie told me later, with pointy toed alligator Gucci shoes and electric blue suit came in with a briefcase full of hundred dollar bills. And Bernie was saying, “Hey, we can get vitamin pills and something for food rations.” And the guy says, “Why thank you Mr. Gross, I believe my problem is being taken care of.” He got up and walked out of the jail.

Q: That is just a modern style.

NALLE: It was unbelievable. The police would shake down the tourists, they'd go up to tourist and say. “Welcome to Belize, man.” And would pat him in the back and in doing so they'd leave a couple of marijuana leaves. The cop would say, “Oh, what's that on your shoulder? Hey boy, you've got pot. You come on down to headquarters with me. Unless you want to take care of me right now.” And the poor tourist would pull out a \$5 bill and give it to him.

Q: You were there for the independence ceremony?

NALLE: No I left. I was ready to get out, I was tired and it was a hard post. The old Governor had left and a new guy came in. And he was not helpful. The old Governor had tried to get the Independence taken care of through persuasion. Also the British had a great deal of trouble in working out with Belize just what the terms of independence would be. This went back and forth.

So I was very happy to get out. I had a phone call from PER and they said that—How would you like to go as Consul General to Izmir? I said, I don't even have to talk to my wife about that, well, I'm ready. I made up my mind in 2 seconds. Sheila was tired, housing was just excruciatingly bad, just awful.

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Q: In Belize.

NALLE: Yeah, in Belize, just unbelievable. Living was difficult. Next to Iskenderun, it was the hardest post we were ever stationed in. Sheila had liked it at first but she got tired.

Q: Did you not have a Principal Officer's residence there?

NALLE: An apartment over the office building. We couldn't stand this. She was sitting at the place one time, kept scratching her head, couldn't figure it out. It was a termite, it was eating away at the wood and the sawdust was falling on her hair. We had a hurricane that nearly blew away the whole city at one time. The Department sent down a fire expert, he got one look at the building, turned to me and said, "Twenty minutes." I said, what do you mean? He said it'll take this place 20 minutes to burn to the ground.

It was hard duty. Fortunately we did have the boat and it was cheap to go to Miami. Get a round trip ticket to go to Miami from Belize Air for \$200.00. It wasn't very safe but it got you there. And so Sheila would spend a lot of her time up in Washington. It was awful hard. Again, I was probably drinking more than was good for me.

I didn't get along with the new Governor at all. He's one of these matey Brits who slap me on the back and started calling me Beau from the first time we met. I don't think that's an appropriate way to behave. I was a little reluctant, I never called his predecessor anything other than "Governor." It just seemed appropriate.

Q: No wonder then you were pleased with the prospect of going back to Turkey.

NALLE: In Izmir we had a very nice, well organized office. We had a gorgeous official residence to live in, beautiful house. You know Ken Burns? Did you ever meet Ken Burns?

Q: No. I've heard the name but I never met him.

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NALLE: Ken was responsible for building this house in late 1950s. He'd come up to Ankara from time to time when I was with the Embassy there, and I'd meet him in social affairs. He'd talk about the house he was building.

A beautiful place, wonderful FSNs, and this time we really went first class. We had a boat from Hong Kong, a 30 foot diesel trawler. We'd go to sea and be out for 10 days without touching land, except maybe stock up on fresh vegetables and drinking water, that kind of stuff.

Q: Beautiful islands near there too.

NALLE: The Turkish coast is the last unspoiled part of the Mediterranean Sea. It is so beautiful. You can drop anchor there and there won't be another boat within 5 miles of you. It's not that way anymore, the 15, 10 years we've been away. It's turned into a very popular cruising area. When we were there it was just deserted. And the work was fascinating.

Q: What were your principal functions?

NALLE: We had 2 major NATO offices, Allied Forces Land South East, with a Turkish 4- star commanding and a U.S. 2-star as his Deputy. In the old days that had been an American 4-star slot but we changed it around, it's a Turk job now. The Deputy was an American. We had a tactical air force with a Turkish 3-star and an American 2-star as his Deputy.

I mentioned at lunch that I was delighted and thrilled at the way the American military personnel were behaving in Turkey. We had very few problems, town and gown problems, very few. We had a lot of Americans who had volunteered for Turkey. Some of them in 2nd tours of duty. They obviously liked it. There were a few bad apples, for the most part they behaved well. We had quite a number of ship visits, U.S. ship visits. We had growing U.S. investment. We had the Aegean Sea dispute.

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NALLE: So as I was saying, we had increasing American investment. We were trying to attract more. We had the annual Izmir Trade Fair. It was always kind of a cliff hanger, whether or not we were going to participate. It was a joint USIS-State Department-Department of Commerce operation. I think it was very successful. The U.S. pavilion always, after Perils of Pauline kind of adventures, always ended up as one of the most attractive and heavily visited at the fair.

That was a lot of fun. I used to go down there every night. Spend time at the Pavilion, talking to people, sit around and drink coffee or go to look at the other pavilions and stuff. It was summer and the weather was pleasant. It was just good fun. We had a few individual business companies coming in.

We had some consular problems but not many. The case that hangs in my mind is the case of Mrs. Jean Lapere. Who is the daughter of the guy who gave that big statue gallery down here on the Smithsonian. You know that round one? Anyway, Mrs. Lapere is the daughter of that man. He's a billionaire, American, who gave his collection of modern sculpture. He built the whole gallery himself, right next to the Air and Space Museum.

Q: Not the Hirshorn?

NALLE: Yeah, the Hirshorn. She was Hirshorn's daughter. Well, she got arrested for trying to take antiquities out of Turkey. She claims she didn't know there was such a law. I contended at that time, the daughter of Hirshorn must have goddamn well known something about the business in antiquities, in statues. Particularly in view of her father's record in that matter.

Well anyway, she was caught and thrown in jail. And such a deluge of congressional attention, I'd never seen in my life. Some of it was sickening. I got a message from Senator Percy saying he didn't know Mrs. Lapere himself, but his children did and therefore she

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was all right. Therefore, she should be let loose from jail immediately. Pat Schroeder's husband, Jim, came out in person to help Mrs. Lapere get out of jail. Jim Schroeder turned out to be a very nice guy who very quickly realized that there was very little, or nothing, that he could do and went home. He couldn't have been nicer. I spent a lot of time with Jim Schroeder, I've seen him since. And he knew what was up.

The work we did was unbelievable on behalf of that woman. She got back to the states and wrote a book that's sort of wishy washy. I don't think it acknowledges everything that was done for her, not just by the Post but the whole US government. Jane Lapere left an extraordinarily bitter taste in my mouth. We put it on the line for her and never a word of thanks.

At the same time we had a young Air Force kid in jail, nobody gave a damn about him. No letters coming in for a black air force sergeant who was in jail. No letters coming in from Senator Percy for him. No letters from the Department. The Department also was pretty craven on this thing. They said—we'll back you up—but they never said, we'll get out in front of you. I felt awfully bitter about the Department's response. No effort what so ever, to take any monkeys off my back.

I had a superb young officer who did the econ/consular job there. A genius, he's going to be an ambassador to Japan one day. His mother was Japanese, his father was a retired American army officer. He and his wife were both FSOs and they are some of the nicest and brightest young people I've ever worked with in my life. He's studying Chinese now, he's a language freak. He just soaks it up. He did just unbelievable heroic work for Jean Lapere, never a word of thanks. The same for our wonderful FSN staff.

So we had a little consular work. A great deal of sort of semi-representational work. I've always felt that one of my absolutely essential jobs is traveling around the consular district. Izmir was about the only post in Turkey that did any traveling. Dan Newberry, bless his heart, I'm not ashamed to say this, I used to tell it to him in his face, never left the town

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limits of Istanbul. Nobody at the embassy in Ankara ever left the embassy for fear that there would be somebody sitting in his desk when he got back. The people down in Adana were too busy to do much traveling. We were the people who had a real travel program.

I think the only time that anything I ever wrote got over to the White House, came when I was in Izmir. I had been on a long trip, just at the time of the infamous Armenian resolution. Part of my trip was to assess the damage that the Armenian resolution would do to us if it were passed. It was a brutal experience. I made it a point to visit the provincial headquarters of all the political parties. And the anger was palpable. I'd never seen anything like it. One place we got into a real shouting, name-calling, I was using fairly bad language talking to these Turkish politicians about what they were saying about the United States. It was unpleasant, it was not a friendly discourse, it was nasty bitter argumentative disagreeable anger. Bile was being let loose.

At one point I stopped in to buy gas out in the middle of the Anatolin plateau, along the road. And the old fellow who was pumping gas, started beating my ears about the Armenian resolution. And I put that in as almost an afterthought on what I thought was my more meaty report on the political reaction.

I got a letter from a friend who said my little thing on the gas station had so caught the eye of the people at the Operations Center that do the briefing books, that they had put it in the Secretary's briefing book. And they were given to understand that it had eventually been sent over to President Reagan for him to see as being on the level of something he could understand it. All this talk of the political parties didn't interest him very much, but this old guy pumping gas, white-bearded old Hajji Bektash kind of fellow pumping gas, was the sort of thing that would grab Reagan's eye. So that I think that is the only time I'd gotten out of the State Department.

Q: Sentiments ran high in that question.

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NALLE: We had very major security plans growing up in the event that the resolution might be passed. It was not passed. The Turks just don't understand the American political process. A congressman can introduce something like this, it was Tony Coelho from California of Portuguese background not Armenian himself. And now I believe under strict investigation for corruption in office. He was the one who introduced it because his district is heavily Armenian. And this was done simply to make the Armenians happy and to get him votes.

The Turks would take the high moral ground and say, this is no way to treat a faithful and loyal ally. By any terms, other than American terms, it is no way to treat a loyal and faithful ally. But Coelho doesn't give a rat's ass about what the Turks think. Coelho wants to get reelected. It's kind of disgusting but you have to put up with it.

And then we left Izmir, sold my boat and went to Switzerland.

Q: Yes, now you're in Europe.

NALLE: Now I'm in Europe, after 30 years in the Foreign Service, in a developed country, and bored to death.

Q: What was your job there?

NALLE: Counselor for Refugee and Migration Affairs at the US Mission in Geneva. Which was a very anomalous kind of job, I was in the Mission but not of it. The Mission is run by IO. However, my office is not run by IO. I did not report to IO, I had my own budget, I reported to RP, the Office of Refugee Programs. My own budget, my own administrative staff, everything, except that the Ambassador was my boss and that I went to staff meetings. I participated in all the embassy goings-on. But I had a 500 million dollar budget for refugee programs, and I forget what my administrative budget was.

Q: Did you have any staff?

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NALLE: I had 3 FSOs, 7 locals. It was a very busy job. I was primarily dealing with the UNHCR but I also dealt with, do you remember Jim Carlin?

Q: Yes.

NALLE: Jim Carlin was there in what we call ICM, the Intergovernmental Committee on Migration, a very well run organization that Jim worked with for so many years. I dealt with both the ICRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross. I dealt with LiCross, the League of the Red Cross. I developed an unbelievable admiration for the ICRC. It's all Swiss, there are no non-Swiss in it. And the things they could do are incredible. They are the operating arm, you might say, of the Red Cross. Particularly in as far as the treaties regarding prisoners-of-war and all that kind of stuff and refugees are concerned.

I was sitting in an office there at Geneva, they had a little headquarters in Geneva, talking to one of the fellows who was the Director of East African Affairs. I asked him a question and he said, "I'm not sure of that, wait a minute." Then he held what I thought was a telephone on his desk, he picked it up and said something in French. Then he continued, "I have Mr. Nalle of the American mission here and he asked me about this problem in Kenya. What can you tell me?" They talked on the phone back and forth for a minute. Then he hung up. Yes, he said, that was my agent, my representative in Nairobi.

Q: *Very good communication system.*

NALLE: Then I remembered there was an antennae field a couple of miles out of town out of Geneva, along the lake. That was always said to be, theoretically it was classified but everybody always said the ICRC antenna farm for all their communications. A very well run and efficient organization. I might dwell, if I could, on the political ambassador there. He is the 4th political ambassador I have worked for and he epitomizes everything that is wrong with political appointees. The others I worked for—Ferguson was an intelligent, thoughtful, hardworking, receptive man. Strausz-Hup# I did not get along with him at all,

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I did not agree with his political opinions, I didn't agree with the way he was handling Turkey, I'd have disagreed with him if he had said it's black, I'd have said it's white. But he was an able, intelligent, ill-tempered mean little man. I watched him at an archeological ruin translating the Greek and Roman inscriptions on the stones which not many career ambassadors could do today. So Strausz-Hup# was there.

Well this one was Gerry Carmen and his claim to fame was that he had been Chairman of the Republican State Committee of New Hampshire and had delivered New Hampshire to Ronald Reagan. He was a used tire salesman. Everything that was wrong could be wrong. He hated the Foreign Service, he hated Foreign Service people. I have watched him twist and torture his Admin Officer till the guy had tears running down his cheeks. The Admin Officer was no genius but he was perfectly competent. He had the mission running and running well. He was saving money, he was doing a good job, he just wasn't very dynamic.

Q: Who was this man's DCM?

NALLE: Ron Flack when I was there.

Q: I know Ron.

NALLE: Poor Ron was suffering, you can't imagine how Ron suffered under this guy.

Q: This is our ambassador in Bern?

NALLE: In Geneva, the US Mission in Geneva.

He could speak no French. I suppose that's all right, I don't speak that much myself, I can get along. He held the UN in contempt. He was an anti-UN guy. As I say, he hated FSOs, FSO people, he hated the diplomatic life, he was the laughing stock of the diplomatic community in Geneva. My colleagues would come up to me and make jokes about him and I had to defend him, much as the thought filled me with horror.

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He got after me one time. My predecessor had quit because of him. They're on a round-the-world tour inspecting refugee camps and my predecessor, Carl Beck, sent a cable from Bangkok where they were, saying that he wanted an immediate transfer, that he could no longer get along with him (Ambassador Carmen). That relations were such that he had to leave. And the Department sent back a soothing message saying, yes, of course, as soon as you get back to Geneva we'll arrange for your transfer. Carl cabled them back and said, "You guys don't understand, I want a transfer, now, from Thailand." And they gave it to him.

I got into a fight with him one time. He wanted to do some inspecting of refugee camps in Africa, which we all thought was probably a good idea to get him out of Geneva for a couple of days, if nothing else. But he wanted to go to Washington first and he wanted me to pay for his ticket out of my RP budget. I said, "Mr. Ambassador, I really can't do that. We can get down to Africa from Geneva very quickly and easily, Swissair flies down there everyday." But no, he wanted to go into Washington first. Well, I said, I really can't do it. I'll tell you what I said, "I'll write a first person cable, I'll put your case to them in the strongest words I can, you can sign it, read it, do whatever you want. But I cannot pay for the ticket until I have written orders." He said, "Oh Beau, you fancy pants State Department guys." Those are his very words. "You fancy pants State Department guys, call somebody, your hotshot friends back in Washington, they'll cut a deal." I said, "I'm sorry Mr. Ambassador, I need written orders from the Department." And he said, "Come on, call one of your friends, they'll take care of it for you. Nobody has to know about this." I lost my temper. I stood up and said, "Make your own fucking phone calls Mr. Ambassador," and I walked out of his office.

From then on he practically never bothered me. He'd kid me at staff meetings, "You all watch out for Beau, he has a quick temper." And I looked down at him one time and I said, "Yes sir, I do," and I smiled at him. But I mean, what he did for the United States was disaster piled up on chaos.

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Q: By the way, did he go to Africa?

NALLE: No. He couldn't stick it to Washington. And then he forgot.

Another thing. AID had bought some German trucks, Mercedes trucks, for use in Sudan, in their refugee operations in Sudan. This is long before I got there. But shortly after I got there, I got a phone call from the Ambassador in his office upstairs and he said, "Beau, what's this truck deal?" I'd only been there a couple of days, I said, "Mr. Ambassador, what truck deal are you talking about, I'm not familiar with it yet." He said, "AID has a lot of German trucks." I said, "I don't know about it, let me check. I'll get back to you."

So I pulled out the file, John Campbell, my assistant, and I looked through it. We discovered that AID needed trucks, they had gone to all the major American truck companies with the specs that they had, the American truck companies don't build trucks like that. Another example of American industry at its best. We don't do anything like that. AID went to Mercedes. Mercedes, said, yes sure, we can give you 50 of those next week. AID got a congressional waiver on the purchase of foreign goods. Went ahead and bought the trucks.

Well, it turned out that they weren't all as good as they were all cracked up to be, they kept breaking down. So the cost of maintenance was getting pretty high and there was a lot of cable traffic. And Carmen got on to it and he got on to me. And kept badgering me about these trucks and I kept saying, "Mr. Ambassador, AID signed the trucks deal before I got here." He put it on grounds that it was sort of my fault that AID bought these trucks. I said, they bought the trucks before I ever got to Geneva. It looks like it's a pretty bum deal but there it is. They complied with the law, the law provides that under certain circumstances AID can go outside of US channels for procurement. They got the necessary congressional waiver. That means that the Congressmen from Detroit, and Michigan, and General Motors, Chrysler, Ford either didn't object or voted in favor. There's nothing more that could be done of it.

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Every staff meeting almost for 2 years, he'd beat me about on head and shoulders about these trucks. I just got to the point where I didn't pay any attention to it.

He gave a series of conferences on the free enterprise system, which were actually not bad conferences. But he wanted me to provide funds out of my representation funds for these conferences. "Mr. Ambassador," I said, "I'm in the refugee business, I'm not in the free enterprise world." I said, I'm all for it but I can't misuse representation funds. He got after me, and after me, and after me.

Finally, Ron Flack said, "Beau, I don't want to tell you how to run your business, but you can be in real trouble if you don't come through with something for the Ambassador's conferences." So I signed a voucher for I think \$150.00 or whatever. I never got caught but if an inspector got hold of it, I think I'd have been medevaced back. Carmen would never have given me a hand.

So I quit. I knew I was going to be selected out, I said, screw it. And came home. The Department with its usual warmth and friendship and one thing or another. I went through the retirement seminar and they gave you that little card. You know, I have 2 Foreign Service stories I love. They gave me this little card that said blah-blah-blah, always performed, loyal, valuable, honorable service. I looked down on it and I discovered they spelled my name wrong.

Q: You gotta have confidence in the system.

NALLE: The other one, was one time in Guatemala. We used to have to take the classified pouch over on pro-courier service over to Guatemala City. I took the pouch over one day. Then you get to spend a couple of days leave. Guatemala is a beautiful country, I would go bird-watching with my wife. She'd collect orchids and I'd watch birds.

One time I got over there and thought I should visit the DCM. So I went up to his office, hot, sweaty, wearing a guayabara and I said to his secretary—well I'm here, I guess I ought

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to stick my head in and say hello. She said, well as a matter of fact, he's leaving tomorrow to go someplace. But he's free right now, why don't you pop in. I said, sure if he doesn't mind that I'm like this. She looked at me and said, I guess not. We were pretty informal in Belize, it's a place where you have to be informal. So I walked into the office and there was this guy in a white shirt, necktie, beautiful silk suit, polished tasseled loafers, the whole bit. He got up with his manly friendly FSO smile, stuck his hand out, and shook hands and said, "Did you go to Princeton?" I said, "Hell, no."

Q: What a way to introduce yourself.

NALLE: What a way to start off. But you know, would I do it all over again. I'm 100% certain I would. I had some wonderful times. Did I make any friends? I don't really think so. I don't think Foreign Service people make friends.

Q: It depends on what you call friends. You mean friends in your foreign posts?

NALLE: No, I mean American.

Q: Well, some of your colleagues obviously.

NALLE: George is a good friend. But he quit the foreign service 15 years ago to work for NOA. I understand he's done very well over there. I didn't make many friends. I'm not the kind of person who makes friends, I think that is one of the problems.

Q: Well you were obviously at interesting situations in interesting times.

NALLE: I went to some wonderful posts. What would get me to do it all over again would be the ability to spend 4 years in Uganda or 3 years in Belize or 11 years in Turkey. But forget about the Foreign Service.

More to the point, did I or did any of my colleagues, did I ever make foreign policy? Never. I don't think I saw a Secretary of State more than 2 times in my life. I carried up

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Ambassadors up to see Dean Rusk. The last thing he wanted to do was to muck around with a bunch of Africans. He had other fish to fry. He'd always say when the meeting was over, "Mr. Ambassador, it's been wonderful to see you and please remember, anytime you have any problems whatsoever, don't hesitate one instant to call Mr. uh Mr. uh" He'd look at the briefing paper. "Mr. Nalle here, your Desk Officer will be very glad to help you out."

You don't, except with very rare occasions, really get involved in the policy making business.

Q: Well that's a whole another discussion. Whether foreign service officers should be making policy or not.

NALLE: All right, influencing policy.

Q: Influencing is another thing.

NALLE: But I didn't do that really. I did play a role in Belizean independence. Well, hell's pecker, the world's not going to stop turning around because Belize is independent.

Q: Well you also obviously had some things in Uganda. The Department must have had to pay attention to the things you were saying.

NALLE: I don't really think so. I was told, long before I had a chance to make my opinions known, that our relationship with Uganda would be unchanged. They didn't ask me for my opinion, they told me how it was going to be.

Q: That's the point I was trying to make. That officers in the field have little opportunity to make policies.

NALLE: That's declining.

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Q: It's declining now? I'm afraid it is. Although the thing that encourages me is, and I think it probably encourages you if you think about it, are the quality of the people you brought in 20 years ago and the quality of the people I brought in 25 years ago. Now rising to the top.

NALLE: I'm not so sure they're all that damn good.

Q: Many of them were good.

NALLE: Many of them were, and many of them remind me of the young man I noticed one time when I was in a reception in Nairobi when Bob McIlvaine was Ambassador. He was talking to a Minister of Kenya, the Minister of Defense. The National War College was there, we had a joint East African briefing. The Minister of Defense poured beer down his front and Bob was talking to this guy and the junior FSO. It was obvious that the Minister's beer needed replenishing. And Bob turned to the junior, and said, "Would you mind getting the Minister another beer," very politely. The guy said, "I'm not a butler." That's the new breed.

Q: I'm sorry that isn't the new breed that I handled.

NALLE: I'm not all that impressed with them. There are some bright ones, sure there are.

Q: Do you have any last comments you would like to make?

NALLE: I've got a lot of them

Q: Well, let's have them.

NALLE: Another point I have is one I've thought about. I'm not certain that being all that smart is an asset. I don't think you have to be a goddamn genius to do the bulk of the work that we do in the Foreign Service. Now, if you go to some of our critical posts, yes. Ability

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of the highest order is required. But to be anything from Charg# D'affaires to Admin Officer in Uganda, you don't have to be all that smart.

Q: You can't be a dummy either.

NALLE: Can't be a dummy. You've got to be what Harold Nicholson called, "a humane skeptic." I'm reading some of Nicholson's books right now, half way through "Curzon." Curzon strikes me as one of the dumbest guys to come down the pike. Not dumb but inept.

Anyway, I often think, they used to say that the qualifications for the Foreign Service, were a smattering of French, a good tailor and a private income. And maybe that's not such a bad policy after all.

I'm perfectly serious. You don't have to be another George Kennan or a Chip Bohlen or a Tom Pickering or a Raymond Hare, to do a vast number of jobs in the service. And I think we're trying to oversell the business too much perhaps.

Q: You see, when those people you mentioned rose to the top, we were glad that they were men of character and extremely bright. Now I agree with you, they do not need this when they're on the visa line in Jamaica or in Manila or other places. They are pounding those things out day by day. That's the way we start out in the Foreign Service. But we're always looking for our people to rise to the senior positions where we do want them to be bright.

NALLE: There will be a few who will always be there. But people should not get it into their heads that they're going to be the people who are providing advice on the conduct of relations of this great country of ours. They may be providing advice but it won't be listened to.

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And finally women and wives. My dear wife used to say, kind of sadly, she sort of wished somewhere along the line, somebody had said, "Thank you." Never once did she feel that anybody had ever taken into consideration her interest, her abilities, she was a Political Science honors graduate from Bryn Mawr College. That nobody had ever stopped to consider that she was a living person. She was regarded as a machine by everybody. Even the good ambassadors tended to just take her and her colleagues as something that was there.

Q: This is a shame. This is inexcusable.

NALLE: She just dropped out of the Foreign Service. She did a little bit in Turkey, she likes Turks. But in Switzerland, she'd say, "You want to have a party, go ahead have a party. I'll just go upstairs and read a book." Her cancer was also starting to be very serious. But she was just fed-up. We'd get invited out and she'd say, "I'm not going. I don't need to sit next to the (whatever they might be) Taiwanese Charg# D'affaires or I don't need to sit next to the Director of the African branch of the ICRC. I don't want to talk to them, I'm not interested in them."

And this attitude came directly from the fact that she had been, and all wives, I think, generally, just so ignored and neglected. When she had things to do, like the school boards in Africa, she was just thrilled. But the fact that she was sent out to Iskenderun without one minute of Turkish language was just inexcusable.

Q: That is.

NALLE: And this happened to dozens and dozens of other wives. I don't see much improvement except in the case of working couples now. Where you have a career wife who is able to find a job in her own career. But the wife who goes along to support and be helpful, my impression is, is just as bad off as Sheila was 30 years ago.

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Q: And yet in many posts we have opportunities for these wives that just go along to take language lessons.

NALLE: I've never seen that.

Q: My wife has taken them at several posts and found them very useful. Three posts, I know of.

NALLE: I can't remember any place where we had a functioning language program. It was always something the Inspectors fussed about. But nothing ever came of it.

Q: Well Beau, I want to thank you and unless you have any final comments, we'll wrap it up. I want to thank you for being very frank and very good in your comments.

NALLE: It's a mixed bag.

End of interview